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STATE FOR INL--JOHN LYLE

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SUBJECT: SLOVENIA: INCSR PART I

REF: STATE 100992

## I. Summary

Slovenia is neither a major drug producer nor a major transit country for illicit narcotics. The Government of Slovenia (GoS) is aware that Slovenia's geographic position makes it an attractive potential transit country for drug smugglers, and it continues to pursue active counternarcotics policies. Slovenia attained full Schengen membership on December 21, 2007 and adheres to all Schengen border control requirements. Slovenia is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

## II. Status of Country

Heroin from Afghanistan, which transits Turkey, continues to be smuggled via the "Balkan Route" through Slovenia to Western Europe, though the "Northern Route" through Ukraine and Poland is more popular. Although police seized less heroin in 2008 than in 2007, the June seizure of 98 tons of acetic anhydride, a processing agent used in making heroin, is the largest seizure of the agent in history. Cannabis was the leading confiscated drug in 2008, as it was in 2007. Slovenia's main cargo port, Koper, located on the north Adriatic, is a potential transit point for South American cocaine and North African cannabis destined for Western Europe. Two relatively large seizures of cocaine in June and July reflect the continued European trend toward cocaine use.

Drug abuse is not yet a major problem in Slovenia, although authorities keep a wary eye on heroin abuse, due to the availability of the drug. Data on national programs to prevent drug use and reduce demand are unavailable due to an ongoing effort at the Ministry of Health to overhaul its statistical databases.

## III. Country Actions Against Drugs in 2008

**Policy Initiatives/Accomplishments.** The reduction of the supply of illicit drugs is one of the national police priorities in Slovenia. In order to ensure an efficient fight against drug trafficking, Slovenia is implementing its own national program against drugs to supplement the 2005-2008 EU strategy and action plan. Slovenia is tackling illicit drugs and related criminal offenses by conducting appropriate criminal police operations that include cooperation and information exchange at the national level as well as at the regional and international levels. Slovenia takes part in all relevant international and European fora that aim to combat organized crime groups that are involved in illicit drugs.

**Law Enforcement Efforts.** Law enforcement agencies seized 1772 tablets of Ecstasy in the first 10 months of 2008 compared with 783 in the first 11 months of 2007. In 2008 authorities seized slightly more than 12 kg of heroin, compared to slightly less than 59 kg of heroin in 2007. In addition, police netted a little more than 245 kg of marijuana in 2008, compared to just over 118 kg of marijuana in 2007. Police seized 4,949 cannabis plants in the first

ten months of 2008, compared to 8,254 cannabis plants seized in 2007. Through mid-October police seized over 169 kg of cocaine, compared to only 4 kg seized in the same period in 2007. Police also seized approximately 2 kg of amphetamines and slightly more than 400 individual tablets of amphetamines in the first 10 months of 2008, compared to 0.75 kg of amphetamines and 1,000 individual tablets in 2007.

Corruption. As a matter of government policy, the GoS does not encourage or facilitate illicit production or distribution of narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances, or the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions. There is no indication that senior officials have encouraged or facilitated the production or distribution of illicit drugs. Corruption among police officials is very uncommon.

Agreements and Treaties. Slovenia is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, the 1961 UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances. The 1902 extradition treaty between the United States and the Kingdom of Serbia remains in force between the United States and Slovenia as a successor state. Slovenia is a party to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols.

Drug Flow/Transit. Slovenia is on the "Balkan Route" for drugs moving from Afghanistan, through Turkey, a traditional refining center for heroin, and then onward to Western Europe. Some heroin is thought to transit on so-called "TIR" trucks, long-haul trucks inspected for contraband at their place of embarkation, and then sealed by customs authorities before their voyage to a final destination.

Domestic Programs. Slovenians enjoy national health care provided by the government. These programs include drug treatment. The Ministry of Health is in the process of upgrading its databases and altering its methodology for tracking drug abuse and treatment, so no statistics for 2008 are currently available.

#### IV. US Policy Initiatives and Programs

Bilateral Cooperation. Slovenia law enforcement authorities have been willing and capable partners in several ongoing US investigations.

The Road Ahead. Based on the high quality of past cooperation, the USG expects to continue joint US-Slovenian law enforcement investigation cooperation into 2009.

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